

The Knowing**Isaac** must have known

that God had chosen his younger son, Jacob, rather than his older son, Esau, to be his greater heir, for the Lord had directly told Rebekah about this before the dissimilar twins were born (Gen. 25:22-23).

Isaac may have known

that Esau had despised his birthright by selling it to Jacob for a piece of bread and bowl of stew (25:29-34), but perhaps Isaac thought little of this since Esau was his favorite (25:28).

Above all, Isaac knew

that Esau was a skillful hunter and a man of the field who brought in delicious wild game for his father to eat (25:27-28, 27:3-4). Conversely, Isaac knew that Jacob was not an outdoor person.

In old age, Isaac could not see (27:1).

So he was suspicious of Jacob who was pretending to be Esau (27:18-23). Yet, in the end Isaac was deceived because he relied on his sense of touch and chose to disregard the contradicting evidence of Jacob's voice (27:21-23).

The Doing**Isaac** tried

to bless Esau rather than Jacob (27:1-4). Naturally, he said nothing to Rebekah about doing so, but she was apparently watching him closely (27:5) because of his age and long-standing differences (25:28).

Isaac could have

blessed Esau without commanding him to first go hunting and prepare a savory meal. By connecting the blessing with the meal, however, Isaac clearly showed that he was acting in a fleshly way.

Isaac acted quickly.

He could have asked more questions, touched his son more, and in various ways been slow to bless in light of the conflicting evidence (27:22). For some reason, however, Isaac seemed to be in a hurry.

Isaac was not an innocent victim

of Rebekah's deceptive scheme. Though it is easy and natural to blame Jacob and his mother, there are various things in Genesis chapters 25 through 27 that portray Isaac in unfavorable ways. (He lied about Rebekah being his sister in chapter 26.)

The Overcoming**God** allowed

Isaac to be deceived by Rebekah and Jacob, and as a result Jacob was blessed first instead of Esau. Though this was contrary to Isaac's wishes, it was in line with God's long-term plan (25:23).

God rebuked Isaac

by exposing his fleshly selfishness and favoritism. Of course, Rebekah's favoritism and sinfulness were exposed in the chapter as well. Likewise, Jacob did not get away with his sin.

Later, Jacob was deceived

by his father-in-law, Laban (29:15-28), and he never saw his mother again because he was sent away to find a wife (28:1-5) and did not return until after his mother had died.

The story does not end

in chapter 27 or even in chapter 29. God himself appeared to Jacob and blessed him directly in chapters 28 and 32. At the end of Genesis, Joseph foreshadows the Messiah who later came through the line of Jacob's son, Judah (Matthew 1:1-2).

The Problem

The problem was not just favoritism and deception within Isaac's family; it was also willful ignorance on Isaac's part. He had apparently decided years earlier to disregard key facts that he had learned about God's plan for his sons. Ultimately, Isaac was deceived because he had for years willfully and selfishly deceived himself.